

STEPS

to better health

A Newsletter from the *Pick Your Path to Health* Campaign

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Nogales Residents Walk for *Pick Your Path to Health*

On January 9, 2002, over 200 American and Mexican women with diverse backgrounds participated in a walk celebrating the *Pick Your Path to Health* (PYPTH) campaign. Under the leadership of Maria Gomez-Murphy, Executive Director of the Way of the Heart: The Promotora Institute, residents of Nogales, Arizona walked along the streets of their city in support of women's health. The event attracted local officials like District 1 Santa Cruz County Supervisor Manuel

Ruiz; Mexican Consul Carlos Gonzalez Magallon; and Nogales, Sonora, Mexico Councilwoman Silvia Robles.

The Way of the Heart: The Promotora Institute is an invaluable partner in the *Pick Your Path to Health* campaign, truly committed to a vision of a healthy community. This was the second walk sponsored by the Institute. Last March, Ms. Gomez-Murphy and her staff held the first



Nogales residents walk for better health

Pick Your Path to Health walk between Nogales, Arizona and Sonora, Mexico. The bi-national event was a great success and participants asked that the Institute host another. This year's walk unfortunately did not cross over to Mexico due to the tragic events of September 11. However, as a symbolic gesture, a group of women walked to the U.S.-Mexican border and formed a chain on each side, then came together for a handshake and a hug demonstrating their commitment to women's health.

The *Pick Your Path to Health* campaign complements the Institute's mission and activities by encouraging women, particularly women of color, to incorporate simple steps into their daily lives for better health.

"Our goal is to have everyone in this community be healthy and to be a national model for how to take care of women's health. Women are the

Welcome to the First Issue of STEPS

Dear Partner:

We are pleased to welcome you to the first edition of *STEPS*, a newsletter for partners of the *Pick Your Path to Health* campaign. The newsletter will be published quarterly.

In this issue you will find a story on The Way of the Heart: The Promotora Institute's *Pick Your Path to Health* Walk in Nogales, Arizona, and you will read about Health & Learning Connection's courageous and honest search for better ways to serve their community in Eugene, Oregon.

You will also want to mark your calendar to celebrate National Women's Health Week from May 12-18, 2002. National Women's Health Week is a national effort

by an alliance of organizations to raise awareness about manageable steps that women can take to improve their health. This year's focus is on the importance of incorporating simple preventative and positive health behaviors into everyday life. It encourages awareness about key health issues that affect all women.

The newsletter also brings you information on how to order free campaign materials.

If you would like to share your *Pick Your Path to Health* stories with readers, you may submit ideas, articles, or photos for the summer issue. Please send them to Jennifer Malone, Matthews Media Group, Inc., 6101 Executive Blvd., Suite 300, Rockville, MD 20852, (301) 984-7191. Enjoy!

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2002 *Pick Your Path to Health* Pocket Planners Are Better Than Ever!

The demand for the 2002 *Pick Your Path to Health* pocket planners is overwhelming! So far we've distributed nearly 200,000 planners to organizations across the country. The pocket planners offer monthly themes based on the Healthy People 2010 leading health indicators and provide relevant health tips, action steps, health information, and a comprehensive list of women's health resources. A customized planner with relevant health information was developed for each of the following populations: African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and Latinas.

The planner's compact design allows women to carry it with them and use it every day to keep track of their healthy action steps, record medical appointments and immunizations, and ultimately get on a path to better health—one day at a time!

Next year, we are hoping to develop planners for rural women and women with disabilities.

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primary decision-makers for the health of their family. So if we can take care of the woman, the woman can teach their children and husband how to lead a healthy lifestyle. We want everyone, in every neighborhood to have the optimum health that they are capable of having," says Ms. Gomez-Murphy.

A number of organizations and agencies donated materials for this year's walk, including the Office on Women's Health, Wal-Mart, Baby Arizona, and Pampers. These materials were distributed to participants in "goodie bags" after the walk. A local food bank and the grocery chain, Safeway, provided healthful snacks for the participants to enjoy afterwards.

The walk was promoted on Ms. Gomez-Murphy's own radio program, as well as other area radio stations.

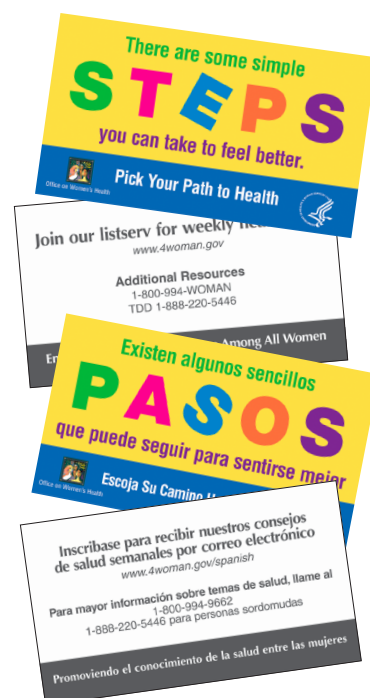
Flyers to community agencies, media outlets, and schools were also distributed. Fortunately, extensive outreach was not necessary due to the success and interest shown by last year's participants. Ms. Gomez-Murphy did recommend allowing at least a month to plan and promote the event. The cost for the program was minimal. With the exception of human labor, there were no other costs associated with the event. Everything was either donated or made by the Institute. Ms. Gomez-Murphy encourages people to seek out support. "People want to help you," she said, "you just have know what you need—be specific!"

Special congratulations to Ms. Maria Gomez-Murphy who was one of the female heroes celebrated by the Lifetime Television program "A Few Good Women." The episode will air on May 16th on Lifetime Television.

Deliver Health Messages to Women in Your Community!

It's easy to provide women in your community with a weekly health message via e-mail from the *Pick Your Path to Health* campaign. The campaign encourages women to take small steps on a daily basis to create a path toward better health. The best part is that the *Pick Your Path to Health* campaign does all the work. So sit back and invite women in your community to subscribe at www.4woman.gov. It's that simple!

Attractive cards promoting this service are available in English and Spanish. Visit <http://www.4woman.gov/PYPTH/CAK/orderform.htm> to place your order.



Pick Your Path to Health Joins Oregon Program Creating Non-Traditional Vehicles for Health Education

By Annette Garner
HLC Program Manager

The Health & Learning Connection (HLC), part of the Sacred Heart Medical Center in Eugene, Oregon has a long history of community education aimed at the childbearing population. In 2001, classes were added to expand services to the pregnant and parenting families... and then we had an ah-ha moment! Maybe it was because a number of us were beyond our childbearing experience and looking into the abyss of perimenopause. Or maybe it was because we had a new Generation X-er on staff who challenged us to think about young women outside the childbearing experience.



Whatever the stimulus, this realization and commitment to expand our program, coincided with our discovery of the *Pick Your Path to Health* campaign. The idea of a monthly health topic tied to leading health indicators was an intriguing format for expanding the health education program to a wider community audience. The Office on Women's Health Region X coordinator was invited to

present the *Pick Your Path to Health* campaign to the HLC Advisory Council in June 2001.

From the outset, the desire was to create engaging and non-traditional vehicles for health education. The original brainstorming led to a template for monthly offerings that spanned the interests of the community.

Two and a half months into the project, we are beginning to look at how well we hit our target, and we've begun to discuss when and how to tweak our offerings. All in all, it has been a fun and invigorating project that took us out of our "business as usual" method of delivering health education. We appreciate the support of the Region X coordinator and the Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health as we move forward with offering ways for the community to get on the path to better health.

For more information about our program, visit our Web site at www.peacehealth.org/hlc.

Time Capsule Initiative for Women's Health

To capture and highlight the most significant health contributions and advancements related to women's health throughout the twentieth century, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is sponsoring the Women's Health Time Capsule Initiative. The Office on Women's Health (OWH) is the lead agency in this effort to preserve health advancements for future generations.

The ground-breaking ceremony will be held on May 14, 2002, during National Women's Health Week, on the campus of the National Institutes of Health at the Lawton Chiles International House. The capsule will remain buried for the next 108 years.

"It is important to remember that the more we learn about the differences between men and women in health behaviors and disease, the more we can customize prevention, diagnostic and treatment strategies," said Dr. Wanda K. Jones, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Health (Women's Health).

The time capsule will contain more than 70 items that document how preventative health efforts and health communications evolved and improved over the last century.

For more information, visit the Women's Health Time Capsule Initiative Web site at www.4woman.gov/TimeCapsule.

To inspire lifestyle changes, HLC offers a variety of workshops, such as:

- *Walk With the Doc*, which combines a discussion of the benefits and techniques for walking, with a change into tennis shoes for an after lunch walk
- *Soup's Up!* at the Pepperberries, a local kitchen specialty store that demonstrates how to create healthy soups
- *Yoga – Fad or Fitness?*
- *You Are What You Eat*, aimed at adults
- *Raising A Healthy Eater*, aimed at parents of toddlers and school-aged children

Ten Ways to Celebrate National Women's Health Week (May 12-18)

1. Hold a kickoff event announcing National Women's Health Week in your community. Invite the mayor, other community leaders, health educators, the media, and the public.
2. Organize community activities such as free cholesterol, blood pressure, depression, hearing and bone density screenings.
3. Incorporate women's health lectures and discussions into health education programs at senior centers, health departments, and other community meeting places during the week.
4. Sponsor a wellness walk/jog and provide participants with free health information.*
5. Ask local churches and other faith-based organizations to talk about National Women's Health Week from the pulpit and to include information about it in the church flyers or newsletters.
6. Hold a town hall meeting on a major women's health issue and broadcast it via satellite to communities across the nation.
7. Ask your city council to issue a resolution regarding National Women's Health Week, alert the media, and invite community members to the signing.
8. Plan a health fair and include healthy cooking and fitness demonstrations.
9. Ask the local college or university to host a women's health symposium to update physicians and other health care professionals on recent research in the field of women's health. Work with them to identify topics and speakers.
10. Encourage your local newspapers or school districts to sponsor essay, poetry, oratory, and/or poster contests on National Women's Health Week asking young people to explain why it is important to stay healthy.

2002 COMMUNITY ACTION KIT

If you're looking for a grocery cart overflowing with ideas to support your *Pick Your Path to Health* campaign efforts, listen up. We are pleased to announce that the 2002 Community Action Kit has been updated. It includes tips on promoting your campaign efforts, ready-to-use promotional tools, and media outreach strategies. The kit was designed to give local organizations most everything they need to promote the *Pick Your Path to Health* campaign. A diskette with the promotional tools and camera-ready artwork is included. The entire kit will be available on our Web site. Go to <http://www.4woman.gov/PYPTH/index.htm> and click on "General Campaign Information."

* Call the National Women's Health Information Center (NWHIC) at 1-800-994-WOMAN to receive free health publications on over 800 women's health topics, or visit NWHIC at www.4woman.gov.



Office on
Women's
Health